

Coleford Medical Practice Newsletter

Autumn 2025 edition

Merger of Blakeney and Coleford Medical Practice

The Partners at Blakeney Surgery (managed by G DOC LTD) and Coleford Medical Practice have applied to merge the two practices. It will support the long-term future of both practices for the benefit of all patients. The merger will go ahead on 1st August 2025.

All the practices will merge and will have a new name **Dean Medical Practice**.

We will still use for reference: Coleford Health Centre, Brunston Surgery, and Lydbrook Health Centre. Patients will continue to be seen at their present locations.

Surgery New Build

We are delighted to share the news on our new build site, drainage works have now taken place at the new surgery site, which allows the planning application to remain open for another 3 years should there be any further delays.

We are currently awaiting upon the agreement from a third-party developer to take over the responsibility for the building and development of the new surgery premises. Once agreed, then tenders will go out for the work. This should take around 12 to 18 months to complete once the building works commence.

Surgery Appointment Locations

As of 3rd March 2025, we have updated how we offer appointments across our three sites:

- Coleford and Lydbrook Health Centres now host most routine appointments.
- Brunston Surgery operates as our urgent care triage hub.

We may ask you to attend a site you have not used before, though many staff work across all three to ensure continuity of care. These changes have improved both efficiency and patient experience.

Appointment Availability & Booking

- GPs: Mon–Fri, 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- Nurses: Mon–Fri, 8:45 AM – 5:30 PM
- Specialists: By appointment

To book:

- To book appointments please use our website, on the main screen click on appointments and then choose "Request a routine appointment" or "Get help with any health problem."
- Call us on 01594 838108 during opening hours.

We will guide you to the most appropriate healthcare professional based on your needs.

Changes to Lydbrook Reception from September 2025

We will have a receptionist on site only when we are holding clinical sessions at Lydbrook. This usually occurs on Monday all day and Tuesday morning.

This change means:

- Any queries not related to dispensed medication, including booking/requesting appointments/changes, test results etc. will need to be dealt with by phone or via our website.
- We will no longer accept medication returns. You can take to any local pharmacy.
- The dispensary will be open as usual for dispensing patients to collect their medication.
- Paper repeat medication requests can still be handed in, although you can order your medication via our website or the NHS App, which we strongly recommend patients sign up to. Using the NHS App helps us process requests more efficiently, whilst providing lots of other benefits including being able to see letters and appointments. Plans to develop it even further are well under way. If you need help to set it up, please contact us.

To download the NHS App, please visit: www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/

Dispensary moving from Brunston Surgery to Coleford Health Centre, September 2025

Brunston Dispensary is merging into Coleford Health Centre's (Railway Road). We will be communicating with patients individually when this impacts them. Medication prescribed for any dispensing patient whilst attending our Brunston site, if needed that day, will be co-ordinated so that patients can collect it from either Lydbrook or Coleford Health Centre, whichever is easier.

Coleford Health Centre is next to a council car park which, by obtaining a ticket from the pay and display meter, provides **1-hour free parking**.

We are confident these changes will allow us to re-direct resources to improve efficiency whilst our new build is in progress. We appreciate your support with these changes.

Dispensary Services

Live more than a mile from a community pharmacy? If so, you are eligible for our dispensary service at Coleford and Lydbrook Health Centres—this includes a free delivery option (subject to terms and conditions).

Dispensary Opening Hours:

Coleford Health Centre: Mon–Fri, 9:00–12:45 & 13:30–18:00

Lydbrook Health Centre: Mon, Tue & Thu 8:30–13:00 & 13:30–18:00, Weds & Fri 8:30–13:00

To learn more, please contact us directly.

Pharmacy First

The new NHS Pharmacy First scheme lets community pharmacists treat seven common conditions:

Impetigo (aged 1 year and over), infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over), earache (aged 1 to 17 years), sore throat (aged 5 years and over), sinusitis (aged 12 years and over), urinary tract infections (UTIs) (women aged 16 to 64 years) and shingles (aged 18 years and over)

UTIs – Go Straight to the Pharmacy

Females aged 16–65 with UTI symptoms (e.g. burning, frequent urination) can visit a pharmacy directly under **Pharmacy First**—no GP visit or sample needed. **We may not accept any urine samples at any of our surgeries that a Clinician has not requested. Samples that are unlabelled, with no name or in an incorrect bottle will be destroyed.**

West Forest of Dean PCN

Our practice is part of a new Primary Care Network (PCN) alongside Blakeney, Lydney, Severnbank, and Yorkley surgeries. Together, we are delivering more connected, patient-focused care through tailored services, flexible appointments, expanded healthcare teams, and shared technology and resources.

Enhanced Access

Evening and Saturday appointments are available across West Forest of Dean PCN practices. These sessions include GPs, nurses, and other clinical staff. We offer these appointments to all registered patients when appropriate.

Advanced Mental Health Support

We offer face-to-face appointments with an Advanced Mental Health Practitioner, who can provide specialist advice and help with medication.

New Telephone System

We have upgraded to a digital phone system—no more call cutoffs. You can now hold even during busy times or choose to call back later.

To check your referral with Gloucestershire Hospitals, either call the Customer Care Hub directly (see below) or press 2 when calling us and you will be redirected straight to them.

Customer Care Hub (0300 422 6360)

Tracking a referral: Contact the Care Hub for updates on referrals and appointments at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

This is available: Mon & Wed: 8am–6pm | Tue, Thu & Fri: 8am–4pm | Sat: 8am–1pm

Missed Appointments (DNA)

In June 2025, over 48 hours of clinical time were lost due to missed appointments—please cancel if you cannot attend. It is quick and easy via **01594 838108**, the **NHS app**, or the cancellation link in your reminder.

Help Us Help You

- Label any readings or samples with your **name and date of birth and date**
- Drop off **samples before 3pm** at Coleford Medical Practice, Railway Drive
- Call **after 11am** for test results—or check anytime on the **NHS app**

Travel Vaccinations

If you are travelling abroad, contact us *at least 6 weeks in advance* for vaccination advice. If you are leaving sooner, please book with a **local Travel Clinic**. Details are on our website.

Non-NHS work

If you have any inquiries about non-NHS work, e.g. medical reports, please contact reception in-person or by telephone.

Management Queries and Practice Feedback

For matters directed to the Practice Manager—such as complaints, suggestions, or general management queries—please email: glicb.colefordmedicalpractice@nhs.net

We aim to reply within three working days. If you do not receive a response, it is possible that the NHS mail filter has blocked your message. In that case, we ask that you follow up by phone, in person, or by post to ensure that we receive your query.

Our Patients and Our Workload

We currently care for **13,580 patients**. Every appointment and call matters—thank you for your patience and kindness as we support our community.

Results of the Patient Survey

Please see the link to the results of our patient survey.

Actions agreed from the comments in the survey discussed and agreed at our PPG meeting are as below:

- Reduce waiting times
- Improve Receptionist training
- Enhance communications
- Streamline appointment booking

You can access the Patient Survey Results by copying the link below:

www.colefordmedicalpractice.nhs.uk/news/coleford-medical-practice-patient-survey-results/

Patient Participation Group

A Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of patients, carers and GP practice staff who meet to discuss practice issues and patient experience to help improve the service and to make reasonable efforts for this to be representative of the practice population. The group meets at Coleford Medical Practice every 3 months on a Wednesday afternoon.

If you would like to join our group, please email: colefordppg@yahoo.com

Fundraising for the Patient Medical Equipment fund

It was suggested at our PPG group meeting that we fundraise for a new ultrasound machine, it is used to analyse blood flow in blood vessel and detect DVTs quickly.

This would help in raising funds for specialist equipment to be purchased, for the benefit of all our patients.

Social prescribing

Social Prescribing Link Workers listen to people and try to understand their situation, and what matters to them. They then “link” that person to organisations and information that can help.

You can find out more in this easy read document using the link: www.tinyurl.com/UPCeasyreaddoc

Autumn 2025 Vaccination Clinics: COVID-19 & Flu

As we head into the colder months, our practice is preparing to deliver seasonal COVID-19 and flu vaccinations to eligible patients. These vaccines are key to staying well and reducing the risk of serious illness this winter.

The COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to:

- Adults aged 75 and over
- Residents in care homes for older adults
- Individuals who are immunosuppressed

The Flu vaccine will be offered to:

- Pregnant women
- Children aged 2–3 years
- Primary and secondary school-aged children
- Children in clinical risk groups aged 6 months to under 18
- Adults aged 65 and over
- Adults aged 18–64 in clinical risk groups
- Carers, close contacts of immunocompromised individuals, and frontline social care workers

Appointments & Clinics

We will send out invitations in September via text, email, phone, or letter. Clinics may include Saturday sessions to make access easier. Once invited, please book promptly to secure your slot.

If you have not received an invitation by early October and believe you are eligible, contact the practice team.

Digital switch over

The “digital switchover” refers to traditional analogue phone lines being replaced with digital systems, primarily using internet protocol (IP) for calls. This transition, which will be completed by 2027, affects everyone who uses a landline, including many elderly individuals, particularly those relying on telecare devices like personal alarms. It is crucial for individuals or their caregivers to contact their landline provider to ensure their telecare equipment will work with the new digital system.

You can access more information by copying the link below:

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/ok0hd55p/digital-switchover-easy-read-text.pdf

Urgent Medication

If you run out of medication out of Surgery hours:

- Use the **NHS pharmacy finder** for open pharmacies
- Check the **Community Pharmacy on-call rota** displayed on the window of the surgery
- Contact **NHS 111**
- Bring packaging of previous medication if you can when visiting a pharmacy without a prescription

Pharmacy Services Near You

Coleford Pharmacy & Day Lewis Pharmacy - Located in Pyart Court, Coleford, GL16 8RG.

Drybrook Pharmacy - Located on Drybrook Road, GL17 9JA.

Day Lewis Pharmacy - Located on 42 Park Road, Berry Hill, GL16 7AG.

Services include prescriptions, health checks, vaccinations, emergency contraception, smoking support, and more.

Support Contacts

Helpful numbers in the community:

- GDASS Domestic Violence 01452 726570
- Forest of Dean District Council: 01594 810000
- Forest Voluntary Action Forum 01594 822073
- Gloucestershire Carers' Hub 0300 1119000
- Lydcare Transport Services 01594 544414
- Childline free phone number 0800 1111

Defibrillator Locations

To access a defibrillator, **call 999** for locations, instructions, and access codes.

Thank You

We are grateful to have you as part of our community. We hope this newsletter has been helpful. Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome—please do share your feedback.

Warm regards,

Coleford Medical Practice